FELLOWSHIP IN
PRAYER

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We spent two days in Colomoncagua, a camp of 7000+ Salvadoran refugees in Honduras close to the border. The Honduran army surrounds the camp, and in August of last year entered the camp and killed 7 refugees, wounded 50, captured 11. The sense of precariousness was everywhere, but so was enthusiasm over newly won literacy, skills in making shoes and raising rabbits, and, most of all, the participation of the women in the political leadership of the camp . . . We were greeted with music . . . and the shout of joy in the midst of tears was irrepressible . . . The topic of the day: the *bienaventuranzas*, the beatitudes; the question: what is happiness? The participants included mothers of young people who were among the "disappeared" and a young man facing persecution. Making choices, taking risks—these were the themes of the discussion of happiness . . . Somehow we got into Tenancingo, a once beautiful village, now devastated and deserted in a war zone in El Salvador. Archbishop Rivera y Damas was trying to negotiate a demilitarized zone there . . . Families were streaming back to their homes, and, in the midst of the enormous task of cleaning up and rebuilding, a quiet joy. Bouquets of flowers were attached to the doors, and children ran up to us: come see the tree yet bearing its fruit; come see our ducks; come see, we are fixing up this house for the nun . . . This joy in the midst of the struggle for justice is no accidental thing . . . Humankind is created for joy.

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A New Era of Spirituality

In the 1960s and 70s, many people saw signs of something like a "closet renaissance" of the spirit. Today we are witnessing the full-blown development of a new era of spirituality unprecedented in the modern era, similar in some ways to the great spiritual recoveries of the 12th and 16th centuries, in other ways unique.

Reflect for a moment on some of the things that are happening. A surging revival of interest in contemplative prayer and meditation has led to the rapid proliferation of retreat houses and "centers for spirituality" throughout the Western world. These centers often function as training grounds for a new breed of "spiritual directors," who undergo rigorous two- or three-year programs in psychology, pastoral counseling, and the history of spirituality before they are considered qualified to help people discern where the Spirit is leading them. They are teaching vast numbers of men and women how to pray.

In the 60s and 70s, people were reading psychology and science, but a fascinating set of recent statistics reports that more books and magazines are being printed in the fields of religion and spirituality than in any other field; more journals are appearing in these areas than in any other area; religious events are once again front page news in the New York Times, and publishers can not keep up with the demand for the writings of C. G. Jung, whose quasi-scientific approach to religion has elevated contemporary respect for mystery. While interest in Jung's religious psychology is burgeoning, psychologies devoid of spiritual interest are in decline: many followers of Skinner have turned to M. Scott Peck.

Contemporary theologians have rediscovered spiritual theology, as well as the mystical tradition in Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and other religions. Enrollment in religion departments in American colleges and universities has doubled in the last ten years, and the defection from the mainline religions of the 60s and 70s has been reversed. In Christianity, the hot-house religion that fires emotions instead of the spirit is being countered by more truly evangelical groups, evangelical in the sense of the *euangelion*, the good news of God's self-disclosure in Christ. David Tracy of the University of Chicago speaks for a new generation of religious thinkers who have overcome arrogance and literalism with

openness: "Real religion," he says, "does not give final answers; it makes us ask better questions."

A Gallup survey conducted in 1985 for the Religious Education Society of America found that "one third of the American people have had life-changing religious experiences," and a doctoral dissertation published in 1984 reported that 70% of people practicing a religion acknowledge spiritual experience. It is no wonder that intellectuals, journalists, clergy, and the "unchurched" alike are writing about spiritual experience and what it may mean for the transformation of society.

A renewed concern for ethics in every sphere of life—medicine, genetic engineering, business, relationships, to name but a few—is returning to the forefront such topics as conscience, values, and virtue. Secular and religious institutions alike are not only admitting their need for community-building and humanisation, but are asking how to put ethical principles into practice, how to bridge the gap between moral reasoning and moral living, between what Fowler calls the "imperative" and the "indicative" of morality.

In addition, we are witnessing a flowering of creativity in architecture, art, and music unparalleled in this century and testifying to the spirit's vitality in our time. Museums offer one exhibit after another on the spiritual dimension of the arts: "Chagall" in Philadelphia, "Treasures of the Vatican" in Paris, "The Age of Spirituality" and "Treasures from the Holy Land" in New York City.

Moreover, women are now at work in most professions complementing the masculine point of view with attention to compassion and relatedness. This liberation of women comes, like all free-ing activity, from the Spirit of God. Some churches and synagogues are still resisting the admission of women to full functioning—ironically, since women are ideally suited to the ministry, priesthood, rabbinate—but beyond the sounds of resistance, the "sighs of the Spirit" can be heard preparing the next century, when men and women will share equal responsibility for society and family.

All in all, a revitalised climate is taking shape that has implications for all of us.

Our era is presenting us with an unsurpassed opportunity to come fully alive, to develop the deepest dimensions of personality repressed or ignored when a materialistic mentality dominates culture. Here is a time to expand our spiritual environment, to form altruistic attitudes, to help the

poor, to get in touch with that "energetic love" which can dismantle apartheid and make all men and women one. Here is a time to search for God, to wrestle with God, to take refuge in God, to discard inaccurate images of God and idols like money and prestige. Here is a time to confront the heavy side of life that we prefer to avoid, what Karl Rahner calls "our collective routine experience" of *loneliness, longing, fear, anxiety, death*. If we refuse to run, he said, from this kind of experience, we will find the divine reality extending itself throughout all life like the sun through the air: "permeating everything, unifying everything, encompassing us on every side."

Each writer in this edition of "Fellowship In Prayer" represents a different aspect of this thriving spirituality: pastoral, intellectual, mystical, psychological, political. A deeply caring, *pastoral spirituality* appears in a discussion of self-love by Paula Ripple, an internationally acclaimed writer and speaker, who applies an updated Roman Catholic perspective to the most pressing concerns of men and women today. A highly *intellectual spirituality* unfolds in classicist Margit Minkin's incisive thoughts about compassion; her article abounds with subtle references to cultural giants of the last three millenia interpreted with Auschwitz unforgettably in mind. The *spirituality of the mystic* fills Eileen Surles' poem, "Fire Across the Night," with an intangible imprint of glowing religious experience. Deborah McCay's ideas on "Avoiding the Void" are grounded in a *psychological spirituality*, post-Freudian, up-to-the-minute, and relevant. A *scientific spirituality* based in a life-long study of medicine informs Claire Welling's discussion of body messages and rest. Our issue closes with an outstanding article by seminary professor Lois Livesey, whose *political spirituality* insists that prayer and action on behalf of social justice are inseparable sides of a single coin.

It is our hope that these readings will stimulate your appreciation of our challenging era and intensify your response to it.

MFG

When I was first asked to give a talk in front of an audience, I had to hold onto the podium in order to stop my knees from buckling under me. It was only when I realized that my shyness and awkwardness were a form of self-centeredness, and that I, myself, didn't matter, that I began to be able to open my mouth and speak, to look at the other person's needs instead of my own, to be able to reach out instead of drawing back.

Madeleine L'Engle

I said to the almond tree
Sister, speak to me of God.
And the almond tree blossomed.

Nikos Kazantzakis

John Wesley, a brilliant preacher, was approached one day by someone who told him what a magnificent sermon he had just preached. "Yes, I know," he replied. "The devil has already told me."

As a result of (the corrections we receive in childhood), we develop instincts of self-protection. We try to cover or pad our egos to prevent further damage. Psychologists call these protective efforts "ego-defense mechanisms." The sadness is that they camouflage the "real me."

John Powell

St. Bernard was reproached by his enemies with the inconsistency of preaching evangelical poverty while making his journies on a magnificently caparisoned mule, which had been lent to him by the Cluniac monks. He expressed great contrition: but said that he had never noticed what it was that he rode upon.

Evelyn Underhill

What is soundless, touchless, formless, imperishable,
Likewise tasteless, constant, odorless,
Without beginning, without end, higher than the great, stable—
By discerning That, one is liberated from the mouth of death.

The Upanisads, III.15.

Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
yea, wait for the Lord.

Psalm 27.14

Four Half-truths About Self-love

PAULA RIPPLE

Practical wisdom and helpful advice overflow from the pen of a distinguished writer in thoughtful response to a popular song. For the singer, self-love is "easy to achieve," but for Paula Ripple, genuine love of self is a challenging, life-long task that calls for clarity, honesty, and the courage to throw away outdated ideas.

We are sometimes harmed more by half-truth than by untruth. We either instantly or gradually come to recognize when we are confronted with the presence of untruth. We feel the presence of untruth in ways that we often do not notice half-truth. We fear the evil inherent in untruth while the harm done by half-truth may escape us. We may remember how our lives have been affected by untruth, but all too seldom do we reflect on and do battle with the destructive half-truths which may appear harmless simply by reason of their familiarity. We may never have noticed that all of us have grown up with some half-truths which have had a profound influence on our approach to life in general and to relationships in particular.

We speak of a person who deals with us in untruths as a liar. We have no such title for the communicator of half-truths.

The influence of the half-truth was brought home to me recently after I had listened to a song that has been very popular. I first heard it played at a prayer service in honor of students graduating from a nearby university. The song is lovely in lyric and in melody. The song of which I speak is Whitney Houston's "The Greatest Love of All."

She speaks of her belief that the children are our future and she describes the importance of coming to know and cherish the beauty and goodness that is present in each of us.

There is a single line in the song which frightens and concerns me because of the unrealistic expectations that it may trigger in those of us who believe in and enjoy the rest of the song.

Paula Ripple is widely known as a speaker at retreats, conferences, and days of recollection throughout North America. Her books enjoy worldwide popularity, and her work has been translated into French and German. For five years, she was Director of the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics. Among her books are Called to be Friends, The Pain and the Possibility, *and her latest book,* Growing Strong at Broken Places.

The line of which I speak states that "the greatest love of all (the love of self) is *easy* to achieve" and goes on to refer to a truth reflected in the two great commands that we must love God, ourselves and others.

I have often spoken and written of the necessity to reclaim the *and* and the *as* in the two great commands which are ever-present reminders to us that we must "love the Lord, our God, with our whole heart, soul and mind, *and* that we must love our neighbor *as* ourselves." I believe that all of life is centered in this threefold relationship. I further believe that many of us do not allow either God or others to love us because we have not learned to love ourselves.

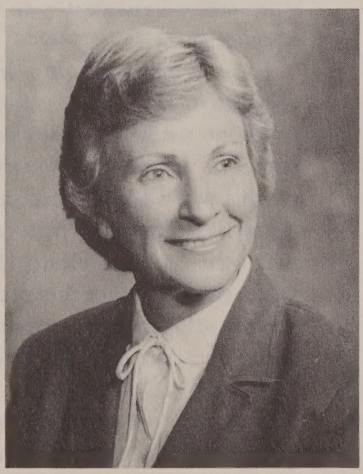
To love ourselves in the way that a loving God invites us to do, we must be faithful to the sometimes painful and arduous process of gradually discovering who we are. The task of knowing ourselves cannot happen in isolation. We are created at the hands of a loving God as relational people, as people called to share life with others.

Our commitment to the threefold relationship with self, others and God involves some ongoing investment in each of the three facets. It also necessitates our continually re-evaluating where we are with each of the facets.

When we reflect on where we are in our relationship with God, we may discover that we have not taken the necessary time for prayer and solitude.

I PRAY FOR YOU . . . That does not mean that from time to time I pronounce certain words while thinking of you. It means that I feel responsible for you in my flesh and in my soul, that I carry you with me as a mother carries her child; that I wish to SHARE, I wish to draw entirely upon myself all the harm and all the suffering that menaces you, and I offer to God all my darkness so that he may return it to you in LIGHT . . .

Paula Ripple



When we think about the people who are important to our lives, we may discover that we have been too busy to share the goodness and beauty of life with them.

When we think about our relationship with self, we may find ourselves confronted with a long list of half-truths which have caused us to set aside either our pursuit of self-knowledge or our sense of self-worth. Teilhard de Chardin says that "every person is an irreplaceably precious gift." Few of us have ever understood or believed the significance of this profound truth. Perhaps even fewer of us have cherished this truth as a life-giving quest to be pursued.

When I reflect on those elements that will eventually destroy relationships with others, I can think of none more common and more powerful than that of a poor self-image. But, I do not believe with Whitney Houston that a loving and strong image of self is easily achieved.

To achieve this gift of loving self, we must examine some of the old adages, the half-truths with which many of us have grown up. Some of these are:

It is better to give than to receive. How often have we heard and acted upon this statement. The problem is that the giver is in the position of power and so if it is my goal to always be the giver I need to recognize that I am then also the one who is always in control. A simple reflection on the difficulty each of us has in giving to a "giver friend" will help us understand why our goal as loving friends is to free ourselves of this half-truth and to replace it with the goal of learning to give and receive with equal ease.

Forget yourself and put others first. There certainly are times when we respond to the needs of others and put our own aside. We do this when someone we love loses a parent or a child in death. We do this when someone we care about loses a job or discovers that they have cancer. We do this when a friend calls and simply needs us to listen and to care. But there is a difference between forgetting self and putting another first when the occasion clearly demands that of us as a loving response and when we are taking this precept as a way of life. Lifelong habits of forgetting self produce people who have forgotten to cherish and nourish themselves; people who have lost a sense of the irreplaceably precious gift they are.

Selfless love is the only generous love. In relationships that are healthy, two people reach out to offer the gifts that each has and to accept the gifts

offered by another. Self does and must enter into every relationship. No relationship that is life-giving can bear the burden of one selfless self and continue to grow in mutuality.

Altruistic love is the most authentic love. I do not believe that altruistic love exists. When we seek to stand in relationship to any other person in whatever way, there is always some reward in it for us. Whoever the recipient of our giving or of our gifts, we cannot offer those gifts without having something come back to us. That is the nature of giving when it is done in a way that is respectful of who the receiver is and aware of why it is that the giver gives. People who claim to offer selfless love may become very exploitive and controlling persons out of their own lack of self-knowledge.

For these and other reasons, it is important for each of us who wishes to learn to love ourselves to take some time for prayer and self-reflection in order to free ourselves of those destructive half-truths which may eventually make us less rather than more loving.

Having given some thought to only four of the half-truths that have sometimes interfered with our response to the threefold nature of relationship, each of us might be able to identify others for ourselves.

Further thought about Whitney Houston's song has led me to a deep conviction that, for each of us, there is not a single greatest love. I prefer to believe that, for each of us, there are three great loves, the love of God, others and self, and that two of them may never come to the fullest expression unless we invest well in the efforts to know ourselves. We might then recognize and cherish well the "irreplaceably precious gift" that each of us is.

Paula Ripple

Where Do We Come From?
What Are We?
Where Are We Going?
by Paul Gaughin

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts, Tompkins Collection

On Compassion

MARGIT MINKIN

The author lost friends in Nazi concentration camps during World War II. The sadness of separation and grief runs between the lines of her article, but with a stoic courage that has overcome all bitterness and despair.

At the center of human existence we find the one bond that unequivocally forces us to recognize one another as participants and sharers in the same experience. That experience is suffering. Suffering is at the core of all human life and for that reason all philosophy, all religion, all great literature is bound to deal with human suffering. It is suffering that allows us to speak of human fellowship, and endowing us for once with the authority of the absolute and the universal. For true recognition of suffering turns into a permanent awareness of its all-pervasive nature that extends far beyond things human to encompass all that is alive, to humanity and to God's mute creation.

That all are created equal is by no means a demonstrable certainty. It is a noble assumption which skims rather than plumbs the depth of its own declaration.

We cannot even assume that all human beings *suffer* equally. For just as we differ in other endowments and deficiencies so also do our bodies have differing pain-thresholds and our souls differing receptivities and sensibilities. Yet all human beings are bound to suffer illness, loss, natural calamities and, eventually, their own extinction, as part of the human condition. And in addition, human beings so bound in suffering by the very circumstance of having been born go on inflicting wounds on one another that far outdo God and Nature in *finesse* and ingenuity. Torture, gas chambers, atom bombs, the better defense against better bombs, the degradation of our earth, once our home and now a growing camp for the growing number of the homeless and the rootless, for the terrorists and the terrorized, not to speak of the bloodless torment people inflict

Margit Minkin is a retired Classicist who came from Hungary to America during the Second World War to seek education in a free society. She did her doctoral studies at Columbia University and taught Greek language and literature at Brooklyn College and Rutgers University for many years.

upon one another in their homes and at their place of work—none of these have anything to do with Fate or Divine Will. They are but the waystations, the Calvary, that we have created for one another in place of the Eden that this earth could be in spite of our shortcomings and brief tenancy here.

What is even more astonishing is the callous indifference with which we look on to all that human beings suffer, especially to all that we suffer at each other's hand, as though it were ordained to happen only to others, never to ourselves. And when it does happen to us ourselves, we endure our suffering with the tearless, mute acceptance of those who know from their own previous conduct that they cannot hope to move anyone to come to their aid.

Oh yes, we have wonderful means of helping. We have wonderful means of snatching the drowning from their lifeboats—after we have helped bring about this misfortune or stood by watching while it was happening, watching dispassionately with the true attitude of the scientist, watching others being humiliated, tormented, denuded of their possessions, their families, turned into human surplus, creatures of no claim to anything on this earth, their inherited abode.

Then, but only then, do we open our purse, throw banquets for the benefit of the poor and dispossessed, hold hands with our neighbors, right and left, in a travesty of human fellowship and, in general, set into motion the entire apparatus of organized, tax-deductible pity.

What causes this monstrous human indifference? Is it our insistence on the facile optimism whereby we hope to escape having to reflect that all things that happen to others can happen to ourselves? Perhaps even more deep-seated than that is our total lack of imagination, in short, our boundless barbarity characterized by our lack of historical memory and our contempt for all but the robust and unmaimed.

A human being writhing in pain is merely an object of indifference or derision. For naked suffering in the uncivilized barbarian arouses laughter, not necessarily because the onlooker wishes ill to the sufferer, but because in his abnormality of behavior the suffering human being invites attention, sometimes under the guise of 'scientific' curiosity, as might a bird deprived of its wings or a hobbled dog. And, finally, in *his* state of exhaustion and despair the sufferer becomes an object no longer recognizable as one of ourselves. Disgusting and repulsive to behold *he* has turned into a heap of convulsed matter.

It is difficult to feel compassion with a creature so disfigured and soiled by physical pain and inner agony. And so the callous onlooker might well think: "This creature deserves its lot. It is so utterly different from me," then turn away and go on.

Clearly, this is not the moment for compassion to take root in us and to grow and mature with us. Feeling another's suffering as though it were our own does not come to us when we are confronted with the raw pain of suffering itself. Its sheer ugliness alone impels us to disclaim all feelings of kinship with the sufferer.

Undergoing another's pain and anguish as though it were our own is more likely to have its origin far from any actuality, almost on another planet. Our sense of compassion tends to awaken in another world, in the luminous world of our childhood, where each new experience comes to us with indelible clarity, and it tends to grow in us during the time of our early adolescence, when we are the harshest judges of the world and at our most vulnerable to its stabs.

Except for rare civilizations which are more attuned to the enacted word, the piercing, devastating experience of another's suffering tends to come to us first through the written word, that is, through reading. It is then, in the silence of our own heart and unobserved by others, blind, as it were, to the outward distortions that suffering has wrought, that we look straight into the sufferer's heart. Thinking his thoughts, tracing his fate, contending with his circumstances we finally arrive at the point where we can no longer extricate ourselves from his suffering. In sum, we see him *as the author sees him*, and not partially, refracted through the eyes of this or that person.

Since our critical judgment is as yet untutored, our tears flow for all alike, indiscriminately, without regard to literary quality, a rare instance, when quality as such is of quite secondary importance. We shed our tears for every sufferer alike: For Caro, the mangy dog who, abandoned and starving, is standing in the wintry cold in front of a butcher shop where people go in and out without even glancing at him. Each time the door opens his eyes light up with renewed hope. And so do ours. And each time his eyes grow dull again as the door closes as he is still standing outside, hungry and unbefriended as before. Added to his misery is our own. For we realize that we have no power to keep the door open, to feed him, to take him home with us. He is standing on a nameless cold street in a book and we are huddled in a chair in our room. Thus, in a flash, and

never to be forgotten, the powerlessness of the suffering creature is brought home to us. We are powerless to prevent Caro's slow starvation just as we are powerless to plead the real innocence of Tess before her judges. In vain would we explain how in her young life one event followed upon the other until, by the sum of their logic, she was delivered up to her death. For no one knows her as we do. We know her as the author does, from the inside. But there is no one to whom we could explain all her circumstances, her intentions, her feelings of responsibility toward her poverty-stricken family, her great love for her kind but provincial husband. There is no forum to hear out either her or us. We would like to cry out in behalf of Cordelia to reverse Lear's misguided judgment and in the end come to mourn the fate of both. We would like to stay Achilles' hand, begging him: 'We just now wept for the untimely death of Patroclos whom we loved because he was your closest companion and because even the women taken by the spear weep for him; for even with them he was always gentle. Do not now inflict the same unbearable pain on Hector's wife Andromache and on his old parents by slaying him.' But we would fare as Hector does who entreats Achilles to return his dead body to Troy for burial. Achilles in the desperation of his grief would perhaps answer us: 'That is exactly why I want to kill him. Let them feel the loss of Hector as I feel the loss of Patroclos.'

While the end of the *Iliad* does not stay our grief, its resolution takes away our breath. When Priam, in the dead of night, goes into Achilles' camp to ransom his dead son's body, Achilles, instead of killing Priam in the fierceness of his grief, looks at him, not as the man whose son has taken from him the friend without whom his life is scarcely worth living; they look at each other, the young, proud hero whom loss has suddenly, for the first time, overwhelmed, and the old, grey-haired man, who has borne loss after loss until his dearest son and the protector of his realm was finally also taken from him, they look at each other, each in compassion for what the other had gone through. For the first time, and at a great price, they see each other as the author sees each of them. Powerless to change what cannot be undone they have gained full and impartial recognition of each other's lot, of the human lot.

It is only when we begin by shedding our inconsolable tears for events that have not happened that we are able to weep over those which have happened and are happening. And it is then that we become fully aware of the immeasurable suffering of human beings through all times and

aware also of the precious moments when we are granted to experience the tenderness and goodness of others which, so much of the time, lie hidden from our sight. It is part of a fully lived, maturing life to make the continued effort not to forget this, that is, to retain something of the unclouded, severely impartial vision of our youth, so that we can see, every now and then, each man as his Author created him, each woman as her Author created her.

Tom Dunham

Fire across the Night

A trail of fire streamed across the night.
The meteor of your grace went blazing by
while I stood spellbound on a mountain height
to watch it vanish down the breathless sky.

A sudden glory beat upon the air,
and peace beyond all knowledge dropped through space.
A joy that soared above the realms of prayer
shattered the walls of self's last hiding-place.

I do not know how far my spirit ranged,
but life and love and death are not the same.
The sky has lifted, and the world has changed.
Divinity has touched my days with flame.

Eileen Surles, r.c.

Avoiding the Void

DEBORAH MCCAY

Deborah McCay teaches religion and English at the Lawrenceville School, and is working on a doctorate at New York University. She publishes articles in educational journals, and is currently writing a novel in a genre which she calls "philosophic comedy."

I've noticed more frequently, as I grow older, the elaborate lengths to which I will go in order to create distractions which enable me to avoid the void within me. "Avoid" is such a wonderful word, since it holds within it that which we all, ultimately, avoid: the void. "Avoid" could, for most of us, be a one-word summary of most of our lives: doing everything we possibly can to keep from confronting that emptiness within us and the pain of longing to be filled which inevitably accompanies it.

Crises are a particularly efficient method of avoidance. I notice how, despite my complaints of being the helpless victim of a series of crises, I am drawn to them. They provide drama and distraction. They demand immediate attention. They don't allow you the time to think about anything else or feel anything else. I'm a master of being able to place myself in the center of a highly dramatic crisis with remarkable regularity. The thing that's so appealing about crises, in addition to the fact that they allow you to temporarily avoid the void, is that when you survive the crisis you get to feel heroic. You get to feel as if you are in control of your life. You get to feel the power of your own will.

Unfortunately (or fortunately), in between crises that sense of heroism quickly pales; so we almost actively (although usually unconsciously) seek out the next crisis so that we can revive our sense of control and power over our lives. Also we find it uncomfortable in between crises because we then have no distraction from the void, the emptiness within us. Crises fill space, even if only temporarily.

Only recently have I begun to see that the true heroism comes in facing our own personal voids. I think I always knew this underneath, or I wouldn't have sought distractions so vehemently and whole-heartedly. Only recently have I had the courage to allow myself to not be in crisis, to allow myself to be O.K. And I see that now is when the real challenge begins. Everything is going well in my life. I am being responsible and

Tom Dunham

productive. Only now that I have done those things I knew I should do, and handled those things I knew I should handle, have I begun to face the fact that there's something missing. But this time, instead of creating a crisis to fill that empty space, I am allowing myself to sit with it, to *feel* that emptiness through my whole being. Crises are much easier to solve than this inner emptiness. For there's nothing specific to be done that will provide a quick solution.

To experience one's inner void is to also experience a tremendous longing. Unfortunately this longing is not one that can be easily gratified, like a longing for a certain food, a cigarette or a drink. It is a spiritual longing. Paul Griffith says it is like "a hunger that requires satisfaction." The heroism required in the face of this hunger is that of giving up control, of patience, of waiting, of not avoiding it but staying with it.

In the 14th century text, by an unknown author, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, we read, "Your whole life now must be one of longing." St. Augustine says, "the life of a good Christian consists of nothing else but holy desire."

In order to not run away from this longing, we are forced to give up the comfortable idea that we have all the answers, that we are in control of our lives, that we can solve all our problems. It requires us to be in a state of not-knowing: not-knowing how to satisfy our hunger. This is a frightening experience since we've spent our whole lives thinking that knowing things would give us control over our lives. But here we find we *can't figure it all out*. Again, in *The Cloud of Unknowing*, we read,

> When you first begin, you find only darkness, and as it were a cloud of unknowing. You don't know what this means except that in your will you feel a simple steadfast intention reaching out towards God.

The true hero is one who can face the "cloud of unknowing" and stick with it. For most of us, there is no other place to begin our spiritual quest. First we must give up the temporary high of a life of dramatic avoidance and go for that deeper heroism of the facing the void. For only out of the darkness of the void comes the light.

> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
>
> And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
>
> And God said, "Let there be light: and there was light.
>
> *Genesis 1:1-3*

Rest Is Always Rest in God

CLAIRE WELLING

This is the first in a series of three articles by Ms. Welling. Each will deal with a different aspect of "wellness," showing how people can become more involved in maintenance of their spiritual, psychological, and physical health.

Feeling good is feeling in harmony with the world around you and the Creator of the World. Your body is always trying to achieve this feeling of harmony, and it is up to you to choose the actions that move you toward physical, emotional, and spiritual wholeness.

Think of the times you felt *refreshed* upon awakening after a comfortable night's sleep. Recall how *relaxed* you felt at the close of a yoga session after the tension had been released from your body. Remember how *exhilarated* you felt after swimming because of your increased circulation and your feeling of accomplishment. Think how *satisfied* you felt after *renewing* a friendship. All of these actions are means of immediate connection to God. Take some time and identify the actions you take in your life that promote these feelings of harmony and wholeness for you. How are you feeling right now?

A person who is feeling good has a spring to his step and his body leans forward as he walks. Consider an enthusiastic, energetic woman who enjoys walking. She purposely parks her car six blocks from her place of work so that she has the opportunity to walk every day. As she walks, she likes to look at the sky, the trees, the flowers, the birds, for she enjoys seeing all these things in God's world around her. Rain and snow do not interfere with her pleasure because she dresses appropriately and comfortably. The increased circulation and breathing stimulated by the exercise of walking add to her feeling of well-being. During her leisure time she also enjoys hiking and seeing the beauty of the mountains. When she is feeling drained of energy, she enjoys sleeping out of doors, going to bed when the stars come out and watching them until she falls asleep. She says the experience makes her problems seem small, and after the restful sleep she returns from these overnight outings with a great feeling of well-being, just as if she had been restored.

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One of my clients practices yoga to make her body feel good. She says that her body responds positively to yoga exercises with increased flexibility and vitality. Since correct breathing is a very important part of yoga training, the increase in oxygen so vitally needed by the body adds to her feeling of well-being.

Besides messages of feeling good, the body's language includes warning messages called symptoms. Symptoms gain your attention. Have you noticed if at first you don't pay attention, the symptoms can increase in intensity until you have to listen? God wants us to make use of the information our body gives us. God guides us towards consciousness with symptoms. We have the opportunity to become an observer of our life and live in the Spiritual realm of life rather than living as a participant in the symptoms and illness.

Some common examples of pain are (1) localized pain (such as a headache); (2) a generally below-par feeling (fatigue); (3) a change in body appearance (for example, a rash); or (4) a change in body function (such as diarrhea).

We have to learn the language of symptoms. Consider, for example, the headache. Although 20,000 tons of aspirin were consumed last year in the United States, not all headaches require aspirin. Proper treatment

for a common symptom like a headache depends on its cause. Is a headache due to hunger? If so, the action required is to eat. If fatigue, rest. If muscle tension, use heat. If eyestrain, rest your eyes and make an appointment to have your vision checked. Headache is only one of thousands of possible symptoms.

Learn to listen to your body's language and trust these messages from God to you. God uses your body to transmit messages all the time. Some of God's messages are mild and can easily be answered by simple actions. Usually we do not listen even though listening would be the wiser thing to do.

Some of God's messages are more serious. Some are severe and may indicate a threat to life and require a professional's help as well. These symptoms cannot be ignored.

Consider the case of one woman, a nurse who worked in the cardiac care unit of a hospital. Even though she was afraid of flying, she flew home for a holiday vacation with her family. There, in the excitement of holiday activities, she smoked more cigarettes and drank more coffee than usual. On New Year's Day, the end of a busy week, she had joined her family to watch television and relax. Suddenly she screamed. She felt a very fast and irregular heartbeat and had the sensation of something tightening on both sides of her neck. She was frightened and dizzy. Imagining the worst, she thought that she had only minutes to live. Someone called for help. An ambulance arrived in minutes and the doctor soon afterward.

What was happening? Her body was making her listen. The symptom of unusually rapid heartbeat (tachycardia) was the result of continued overstimulation—coffee, smoking, stress. After taking some deep breaths and after being questioned by the doctor, she was able to tell about two previous similar episodes. Both had occurred following the combination of flying, fatigue, and overstimulation. Her mother was also able to recall a family history of tachycardia. Everything added up to a serious warning that her stressed body had given her. The warning was not, as she had feared, an indication of the type of medical emergency experienced by patients she cared for in the cardiac care unit. She had not had a heart attack.

The woman had ignored her body talk—symptoms, messages, and early warnings from God. Because she was young, she recovered quickly, but had she been older, it could have been a different story. Because she was able to understand that she had ignored earlier messages her body

had been sending her, the crisis produced a "teachable moment." Her doctor took time to explain the symptoms so that she understood what the danger signals had meant. Today she reports that she drinks decaffeinated coffee on a regular basis and is trying to smoke less. She had learned how to make use of the information her body gave her and to recognize the information as God given.

Another woman seemed to be tired all the time. No matter how much sleep she got, she never felt rested. She thought her fatigue was nothing that she could not get over, and she took extra vitamins as well as iron tablets a doctor had once given her. Vitamins and iron did not help, and she lost four pounds. Her best friend said that she looked terrible. Her message was fatigue. As she ignored the fatigue, the symptom became more and more insistent until she had to listen. Having awakened one night at 2:30 in a cold sweat, feeling completely depressed, she finally called the doctor the next day.

This woman had kept pushing despite her fatigue. Her flurried lifestyle had given her no time to herself for months. Although she could have had high blood pressure, she was fortunate in that all she needed was rest. Rest in God, an examination and some tests showed no other medical problems. Reassurance by the doctor and a relaxing week's vacation at the beach brought relief.

Another patient, a man, had had more stomach trouble than usual for several months. An economic recession had hurt his sales territory. Although he had wanted to get married for a year, he did not get an expected bonus and had to postpone marriage. He had other financial problems. As he bought a pack of cigarettes and a roll of antacid tablets at a stop on a turnpike, he felt an intense burning pain in his stomach, followed by a wave of nausea. He hurried to the rest room with not a second to spare and stared in disbelief.

The symptoms he had been hiding with tablets were caused by excessive acid secretion, stimulated by emotional distress, spicy food, and irritants such as alcohol and coffee. The result of repeated damage to his stomach lining was a peptic ulcer. He went to a doctor who put him on a strict diet to give his stomach a rest. As do many other people, this man had allowed mild symptoms to build up until God sent a message he could not ignore: pain and blood.

The symptoms most commonly felt by people under stress are specific. They are physical signs involving certain organs: the stomach, the heart,

or the head, for example. Most of us are susceptible to at least one such "target" organ because something in our early life sensitized us to ward this response. Sometimes the response is learned from parents. Headaches tend to "run in the family" for example, because a little girl learned that when her mother beomes too busy and tired, she has a sick headache. Most likely she hadn't taken time for physical relaxation or for prayer and meditation and rest in God. Rest is always rest in God.

Messages indicating that the body is not well occur in varying degrees, but all of them are God's warnings that requires some kind of action.

We can learn to listen to our bodies and to become accurate "medical reporters." To practice being a good medical reporter, think of an incident when your body "talked" to you. Try to give the doctor specific information about the message.

1. What was the symptom? Was it pain, nausea, bleeding?
2. Where or in what part of your body did it occur? Was it in the head, stomach, leg?
3. When did it occur? Was it after eating, upon rising, late in the day?
4. Why did it occur? Did it fit a pattern, or had it occurred under similar circumstances?

It is important to be able to describe a symptom and to be specific. The information should always include the duration of the symptom. For instance, "I Haven't felt well the last month" will not do. "About a month ago I started feeling weak and tired" is more appropriate. Other guidelines to follow are to be concrete and to describe the symptom in your own words.

Do not try to use diagnostic terms or names of diseases. Do not try to diagnose your illness.

How could you feel better? It is up to you to choose those activities that make you feel good.

Become aware of your body by developing the ability to interpret messages your body sends you about the way it is feeling. Develop the ability to respond appropriately to your body. Become skillful in the specific description of body messages. Trust your own body. Listen to it carefully when it gives you advice. You, too, can experience a "teachable moment" used by God for enhancing the quality of your life. You, too, can feel good and in harmony with the world around you and with the Creator of the World.

Bread and Roses

LOIS LIVESEY

The "stranger" described by Camus was shrouded in absurdity and despair. But for the author of this article those whom society "excludes," "expells," "intimidates," "subordinates," and "silences" by its contempt are "members of the household of God," and their hard lives are therefore meaningful.

Strangers and Citizens / Justice

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." Ephesians 2:19.

No longer strangers but citizens. This must have been very powerful imagery for the Gentile Christians in Ephesus, to whom this letter is addressed. For in their day, as in ours, it makes all the difference whether you are a stranger, an alien, perhaps even a stateless person—or a citizen, a full member of the community. It is the difference between enjoying the protection of basic human rights and experiencing the utter precariousness of one's life and freedom. It is the difference between participation in the public discussion regarding the common good and in the decisions affecting the common life (we call this "self-determination") and living at the mercy of other's decisions and purposes, in uncertainty and fear. To be a stranger is to be subject to exclusion, expulsion, intimidation, subordination, silencing; it is to be caught between hostility and invisibility. It is the difference between respect and contempt. It makes all the difference whether you are a citizen—or a refugee. Even a refugee camp in Honduras does not afford adequate protection to a refugee from El Salvador—the camp was attacked in August by Honduran army troops. And, in the United States, such a refugee faces the ever-present threat of disclosure and deportation.

Yet it might have been perplexing imagery in some ways. The imagery of citizenship is rare in the New Testament. Indeed, for the Jewish Christians, including the writer of this letter, solidarity with the stranger is the

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cornerstone of faith and ethics. Justice and care for the stranger, the widow, and the orphan (the unfamilied, as it were) are constitutive of the communal memory and social obligation of the people of God. By virtue of this ethic of hospitality, the stranger becomes our guest. We may not practice what we preach, but the principle is clear: "You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Exodus 23:9.

So pervasive is the imagery of sojourner in the self-identity of modern Christians that the proclamation of citizenship can only strike a disorienting note for us. We think of ourselves and speak of ourselves as strangers, pilgrims, on the way to the promised land, always *on the way*. Who of us does not remember feeling a stranger. Who has not said of his or her experience at a school or university church: I really do not feel at home here—or, I'm just here for awhile—or, I go here, but I live somewhere else.

Now part of the problem is that being "at home," or, in the words of this letter, being members of the household of God, tends to connote for us—not citizenship but intimacy—and something, I think, of the Cinderella-Prince Charming glass slipper mystique of "the perfect fit." But there is another side to our clinging to our self-identification with the stranger, which has the quality, not of longing for home, but of temptation. We think of ourselves as strangers—who ought to be treated as *guests*. Thus we view our presence in the church of our choice or the school or the university from the standpoint of a guest. We seek comforting and expect to be comforted; we seek belonging and expect to be befriended. As a sojourner in another's household, we relax without being guilty of complacency; we are not responsible for the dust in the corners (though we might be tempted to take note of it to a mutual friend); we enjoy a good night's sleep while the householder goes to a long community meeting or shares the suffering of a neighbor. As feminist theologian, Beverly Harrison, once observed, at some point *evasion becomes complicity*.

In fact, the writer of this letter to the Ephesians is not interested in the ethics of hospitality but in the politics of citizenship. Writing from prison, a self-styled "ambassador in chains," empowered by the grace of God in Christ to speak boldly (6:20), the writer evokes explicitly political imagery—the Gentile Christians of Ephesus could not have missed its meaning. "You are fellow citizens with the saints" (sum politēs?). It is the

language of the *polis*; it is the language of membership in the commonwealth, the language of civic rights and responsibilities, of participation in public affairs, of action and speech for the sake of the common good and in the presence of others deemed equals or peers. No longer strangers but citizens. The language of the *polis* is the gift of Greek thought to Western civilization—surely the Gentile Christians of Ephesus could not have missed its meaning. Nor can we.

There is another interesting aspect of this passage—worthy of a full-length meditation in itself. The whole point of this passage, taken as a whole, is the good news that, in Christ Jesus, we are reconciled to God and to one another—and, specifically, "the dividing wall of hostility" between Jewish and Gentile Christians is broken down. But, whatever the intentions of the writer, the phrase, "you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" challenges another dividing wall of hostility as well. It is the wall between *oikia* and *polis*, the wall between household and politics, the wall between private and public which, from Aristotle's day to our own, has set the terms of political theory and practice, not to speak of the relations between women and men, slave and free. You are citizens and householders. Perhaps it is the same old rhetoric of patriarchy. But perhaps, just perhaps, it is the good news that the dividing wall of hostility between "man's world" and "women's place" is broken down. Perhaps it is the bold speech of a new cornerstone "in whom the whole structure [public and private, *polis* and *oikia*] is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord." Ephesians 2:21.

What then does citizenship with the saints and membership in the household of God require of us? What is the duty of the Christian and the ministry of the Church? The rest of this letter is a series of exhortations on this point, some eloquent and some notorious, but all for the sake of the upbuilding of the church, that it might grow in unity, in peace, in breaking down the dividing walls of hostility. The letter to the Ephesians envisions a church universal, a church on a world-scale. We are enjoined to "put on the whole armor of God" and to "stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness"—to contend with the principalities and powers (6:11,12,14). What does citizenship require of us? The testimony of the prophets and the teachings of Jesus and the apostles vary as to the details and nuances, but Micah lifts out the common thread: "What does the

Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love mercy [that is, *Hesiod*, which is steadfast love or faithfulness in relationships], and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8. To walk humbly and to speak boldly, according to the letter to the Ephesians.

Grace

Walk humbly yet speak boldly; love faithfulness, do justice. We cannot say less of our citizenship—but we must say more. We must begin again at the beginning of this passage from Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved by faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest anyone should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9.

The truth of the matter is that we have our very lives as created ones, our salvation, and our citizenship with the saints—all within the graciousness of God. The good news of the Gospel is that doing justice is more a matter of grace than of grit—which does not mean just sitting around waiting for God to get things—us—moving again. Rather: "We are . . . created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10.

Reinhold Niebuhr expressed one angle of vision on this, when he connected the struggle for justice with the doctrine of justification by grace through faith:

> Whatever may be the source of our insight into the problems of the political order, it is important both to recognize the higher possibilities of justice in every historic situation, and to know that the twin perils of tyranny and anarchy can never be completely overcome in any political achievement . . . To understand this is to labor for higher justice in terms of the experience of justification by faith. Justification by faith in the realm of justice means that we will not regard the pressures and counter pressures, the tensions, the overt and covert conflicts by which justice is achieved and maintained, as normative in the absolute sense; but neither will we ease our conscience by seeking to escape from involvement in them. (Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, II, 284.)

We are fellow citizens with the saints—yet sinners. The grace which is the gift of God is the promise of divine forgiveness and of divine faithfulness in the midst of our unfaithfulness. It is in virtue of the grace of God that we are free to participate in the ambiguities, the particularities (and partialities), the conflicts and the failures of the struggles for justice

and peace in our time, free to speak and to act boldly, without fear, without making unwarranted claims about our righteousness, utterly confident that nothing—"neither death nor life . . . nor principalities . . . nor powers . . . nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:38.

But Niebuhr saw less clearly, I think, that the grace which is the gift of God is also the power of the divine vision of a new heaven and a new earth and the power of the divine passion, the passion of One who weeps over Jerusalem and suffers unto death—for love of the world. It is the grace which envisions and empowers the struggles for justice and peace, the grace of immigration and advocacy, in which we find the deepest springs of citizenship with the saints in the household of God.

Joy

There is one more thing to be said about doing justice. "May those who sow in tears," says the Psalmist, "reap with shouts of joy." Psalm 126. In the midst of the struggle for justice, there is a shout of joy. We have only to remember the significance of poetry and song in every struggle for justice from the days of Moses and Miriam, through the slave songs of this nation's beginnings, to the civil rights, peace, and feminist movements of our own era.

My husband, Lowell, and I went to Central America in January with two friends. I arrived in Mexico on a Sunday, in time for Sunday dinner with a family of Maryknoll lay missioners. Present at their table were several lay missioners, refugees from Guatamala and El Salvador, a Mexican Indian who had just been told he had inoperable throat cancer. The next day, he would board a bus for the long journey to his home in Chiapas. It was a time of sharing stories of sorrow, suffering, survival, and the shadow of death. We ended the evening singing. Xavier sang the song he had written for his daughter, Leticia Esperanza, born on Epiphany and named for joy and hope. Later, we spent two days in Colomoncagua, a camp of 7,000+ Salvadoran refugees in Honduras close to the border. The Honduran army surrounds the camp, and in August of last year entered the camp and killed 7 refugees, wounded 50 and captured 11. The sense of precariousness was everywhere, but so was enthusiasm over newly won literacy, skills in making shoes and raising rabbits, and, most of all, the participation of the women in the political leadership of the

camp. Again, we were greeted with music—the violin had been made in the camp—no Stradivarius that—but the shout of joy in the midst of tears was irrepressible. In El Salvador, we visited a Christian base community. The topic of the day: the bienaventuranzas, the beatitudes—the question: what is happiness? The participants included mothers of young people who were among the "disappeared" and a young man facing persecution. Making choices, taking risks—these were the themes of the discussion of happiness. Somehow (probably by loading our van with villagers), we got into Tenancingo, a once beautiful village, now devastated and deserted in a war zone ("conflictive area") in El Salvador. Archbishop Rivera y Damas was trying to negotiate a demilitarized zone there. The matter was not yet settled, but families were streaming back to their homes, and, in the midst of the enormous task of cleaning up and rebuilding, a quiet joy. Bouquets of flowers were attached to the doors, and children ran up to us: come see the tree yet bearing its fruit, come see our ducks; come see, we are fixing up this house for the nun.

This joy in the midst of the struggle for justice is no accidental thing. The Shorter Catechism (one of the documents of the Presbyterian Church's confessional tradition) begins with the question: "What is the chief end of man (read: humankind)?" And the answer is this: Our chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy God forever. Humankind is created for delight. For life, yes. For growth in individuality-in-community, yes. And, ultimately, for joy. In the face of violence and the threat of violence, joy gives way to terror. In the face of injustice, joy gives way to desperation. It is very important, in my view, not to trivialize this violation of what it means to be human, especially we who are Christians and who declare that human life is life lived in the presence of God.

The writer of this letter to the Ephesians knew that. The letter is a hymn of praise, a shout of joy. John Calvin knew that (though generations of Calvinists have forgotten it). And the men, women, and children who worked in the textile mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts knew that. In January of 1912, they went out on strike. Their dream, their cry, the song that commemorates their struggle for justice is "bread and roses."

As Close As Breath

You say you found Him at the water's edge
one misty morning when the world was new.
You found Him on a storm-scarred mountain ledge
where you stood captivated by the view
unrolled across the valley. You have told
of countless times you watched an eagle fly
above massed cloudy turrets limned with gold,
and found Him in the eagle, cloud and sky.

Yet He was never lost. He does not play
at hide and seek, nor wander far afield.
We are the errant ones who often stray
and hide in fear that self might be revealed.
The Presence that you found was always there—
as close as breath—as close as whispered prayer.

Emma S. McLaughlin

Three Paned Pleasures

Etched crystal goblets and
translucent French porcelain
stand in the corner cupboard,
shelved
between celebrations.

Starfish
on sand-sprinkled transparency
sits
with souvenir conch
in the curio cabinet.

Open shutters
at my window
spill Light.

Judith Settle

Why Do I Forget?

With a sigh that squeezes,
I try to mold you
and lose patience
when the form unbends.

My heart beats undirected,
breaths are taken without my bidding.
Automatic de-coders,
my sight and sound—
I hum unaware.

Why do I forget the miracle?

Judith Settle

Representatives of religions from all over the world met at Assisi on October 27 for a "World Day of Prayer for Peace." Here are excerpts from some of their prayers.

BUDDHIST

May all beings everywhere, plagued with sufferings of body and mind, obtain an ocean of happiness and joy.

HINDU

May God protect us; may He nourish us. May we work together with energy. May our studies be fruitful. May we love each other and live in peace.

JAINIST

Peace and universal brotherhood is the essence of the gospel preached by all the enlightened ones of the past and of the future.

MOSLEM

And the servants of the Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace."

SHINTO

Although the people living across the ocean surrounding us, I believe, are all our brothers, why are there constant troubles in this world? Why do winds and waves rise in the ocean surrounding us? I only earnestly wish that the wind will soon puff away all the clouds which are hanging over the tops of the mountains.

AFRICAN ANIMIST

Almighty God, the Great Thumb we cannot evade to tie any knot, the Roaring Thunder that splits mighty trees, the All-Seeing Lord up on high who sees even the footprints of an antelope on a rock mass here on earth: You are the one who does not hesitate to respond to our call. You are the cornerstone of peace.

AMERICAN INDIAN

In smoking the pipe, I invite my family to smoke with me and you, my friends, to pray with me in thanksgiving for this day and for world peace. I will pray that we all may commit ourselves to pray and to work for peace within our families, our tribes, and our nations. I pray for all our brothers and sisters walking our mother earth.

Paul M. Schrock

JEWISH

Our God in heaven, the Lord of Peace will have compassion and mercy upon us and upon all the peoples of the earth who implore his mercy and his compassion, asking for peace, seeking peace.

CHRISTIAN

I say to you that hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your cloak do not withhold your coat as well. Give to everyone who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again. And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.

PRAYERS FROM THE MOUNT
by J. Barrie Shepherd, The Westminster Press, 1986.

For those of us who have difficulty clearing space to pray in our overcrowded lives, the aid of a prayer diary with specific morning and evening scripture and prayers can open a 'way in' to daily practice. *Prayers from the Mount* offers such a diary format with daily meditations from that center of Christ's teachings, the Sermon on the Mount. By making the meditations quite personal, Reverend Shepherd has given ancient scriptures a modern context which illuminates their relevance to our own lives. This book might be useful during a specific period of spiritual cleansing and discipline because the meditations cover 40 days. Perhaps most intriguing in this book is the author's suggestion that readers write their own meditations and spiritual diary, and in this way make this book a springboard for our individual wrestlings and growings with God. *KLH*

AN INTERRUPTED LIFE, THE DIARIES OF ETTY HILLESUM 1941-43
Washington Square Press, $3.95.

How do we live in a world which seems to confront us with so much hatred and suffering? Where is God during all the pain? Can God love us and allow such atrocities to take place? Can we be whole sexual, intellectual, spiritual beings, or are all these things mutually exclusive? Perhaps the best way I can describe Etty Hillesum, a dutch Jew whose diaries take place during the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam and culminate with her experience in a concentration camp before her eventual death at Auschwitz, is that her life wrestled with these difficult questions—and she triumphed. Her inner reserves of prayer enabled her to affirm that life was meaningful, and even joyful. The honesty with which she confronts herself as the world closes in around her shows a very human person's profound spiritual journey. Kahlil Gibran said that "Everything in creation exists within you, and everything in you exists within creation," and Etty's attempt to understand this statement in the context of Nazism provides a moving meditation on hatred. *KLH*

THROUGH SEASONS OF THE HEART
by John Powell, S.J. Tabor Publishing, Allen, Tx., 1986, 384 pages, hardcover $12.95

These daily selections from the writings of best-selling author John Powell will help you to begin your day with delight, new strength, and fresh ideas. Reading them is a cross between pastoral counseling and spiritual direction: one leaves the session glowing with love and ready for whatever the day may bring. *MFG*

PRAYERS FOR A LIFETIME
by Karl Rahner, S.J., Crossroad Publishing Co., New York, 1986, 175 pages, paperback $8.95.

This is the last and perhaps the most beautiful book by Karl Rahner, who died in 1984 at the age of 80, leaving the world the astonishing legacy of over *3000* writings. The collection includes about 50 prayers with titles like "God of My Life," "In Praise of Creation," "Freed by God," "The Life of Grace," and a unique "Prayer for Creative Thinkers." The book is an excellent way to approach the thought of a towering genius admired by liberals and conservatives alike, not only for the brilliance and uplifting beauty of his work, but for the quality of his life and unyielding strength. *MFG*

BREAD IN THE WILDERNESS
by Thomas Merton, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, paperback 1986, 179 pages.

This book is for everyone who loves the Psalms. Merton writes in his Prologue that the Psalms offer inexhaustible nourishment not only for Benedictine and Cistercian monks, who "chant their way through the entire Psalter (the Book of Psalms) once a week," but for everyone seeking serenity and interior peace. If we look beyond the literal meaning of the Psalms to their "spiritual meaning," he writes, we will penetrate into the "divine life itself." *MFG*

Rubem Alves, *I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986, 79 pages.

Glenn H. Asquith, *Mature Faith*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1984, 116 pages.

Lois Barrett, *Building the House Church*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986, 176 pages.

Eugene C. Bianchi, *On Growing Older*. NY: Crossroad, 1985, 148 pages, $9.95.

Tony Castle, ed., *The New Book of Christian Prayers*. NY: Crossroad, 1986, 358 pages, hardcover, $18.95.

Evelyn Christenson, *What Happens When Women Pray*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1986, 144 pages.

Clair G. Cosby, *Lord, Help Me Love My Sister*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986, 78 pages.

Robert Faricy and Lucy Rooney, *The Contemplative Way of Prayer*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1986, 110 pages.

Frank E. Gaebelein, *The Christian, The Arts, And Truth*. Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1985, 261 pages.

Shirley C. Guthrie, Jr., *Diversity in Faith Unity in Christ*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986, 144 pages.

Martin Israel, *Coming in Glory: Christ's Presence in the World Today*. N.Y.: Crossroad, 1986, 116 pages, $7.95.

Zephania Kameeta, *Why O Lord? Psalms and Sermons from Namibia*. Phila.: Fortress, 62 pages.

Richard Koffarnus, *Why Believe*? Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 1981, 95 pages.

Leroy Lawson, *The Lord of Love*. Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 1986, 127 pages.

Madeleine L'Engle, *A Stone for a Pillow*. Whetaon, IL: Harold Shaw, 1986, 240 pages, hardcover.

Doris Janzen Longacre, *Living more with less*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1985, 294 pages.

Max Lucado, *No Wonder They Call Him the Savior*. Portland, OR, 1986, 164 pages.

Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger, *Dare to Believe*. NY: Crossroad, 1986, 241 pages, $16.95.

John Main, *The Present Christ: Further Steps in Meditation*. NY: Crossroad, 1986, 121 pages, $7.95.

Arthur G. McPhee, *Have a Great Day Every Day*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1984, 159 pages.

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